

Covid-19 Risk Assessment – gathering in the church building and surrounding premises v8 (9:30 and 11:30am Sunday services)

This risk assessment concerns managing risk for Sunday services - church building and surrounding premises

It is based on advice given in Guidance COVID-19: Guidance COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship and special religious services and gatherings during the pandemic [last updated 24 May 2021]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Name of church	Woodgreen Evangelical Church
Address	Hastings Drive Worcester WR4 0SR
Areas of building assessed	Foyer, toilets, Main Hall, Rec Hall, outside areas
Assessment undertaken by	Martyn Walley (Covid Officer)
Date of initial assessment	30 th June 2020
Revision (v8)	25 th May 2021

The original risk assessment was agreed by the Managing Trustees of Woodgreen Evangelical Church on 21st July 2020.

The risk assessment is underpinned by the following considerations:

- Identifying which activities or situations might cause transmission of the virus.
- Thinking about who could be at risk.
- Deciding how likely it is that someone could be exposed.
- Removing potentially harmful activities or situations, or, where this is not possible, seeking to control risk.
- Tracking incidents in an accident logbook in accordance with the Woodgreen Church Health and Safety Policy.

Woodgreen Evangelical Church is committed to operating in a way that is responsible, appropriate and safe for all those who wish to meet to worship. This risk assessment seeks to adhere to all current guidance provided by the Government for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic. The following measures are the practical steps taken to require this to happen and will be in place before the building opens and services re-commence. All members of the church community and visitors who apply to attend a service will be made aware of this risk assessment and the related Woodgreen Church Community Agreement.

Measures will be communicated as follows: All members of the church community and visitors who apply to attend a service will be made aware of this risk assessment and the related Woodgreen Church Community Agreement. These documents to be available on the church website. Attendees to be reminded of the importance of social distancing and hygiene by service leaders. Reminders and further instructions as necessary to be included in 'church matters'.

Risk	Measure to avoid, minimise or reduce risk	Practical measures (what, who when?)
Spread of virus through aerosols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective levels of ventilation to be maintained throughout each service through use of open windows and doors. • Conversation between <u>seated</u> individuals allowed in the few minutes before services start. 'Mingling' and conversations between those standing not to take place indoors. • All noise to be maintained at a level that allows for normal conversation. • Congregational singing not to be included in services. • Music group singers allowed to sing without masks. • Recorded music used during services to be kept at reasonable volume and attendees asked not to sing along. • Tissues to be provided throughout the building to enable people to catch coughs and sneezes. Bins placed throughout building. • Leader/speaker to be positioned well back from front rows. Leader/speaker not to be required to wear face covering during meeting. • All attendees age eleven and older are, by law, to wear a face covering (except for physical/medical exceptions). • Socially distanced singing of a song allowed to take place outdoors. • Socially distanced conversations allowed outdoors. 	<p>Member of Duty Team (DT) opens adequate windows / doors at 9:00am - in line with Duty Team Schedule (DTS).</p> <p>Actively encouraged by service leader. Included in Woodgreen Community Agreement (WCA).</p> <p>Church Operations Manager (COM) to ensure adequate supply and ongoing emptying of bins.</p>
Spread of virus through touching of surfaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitiser to be available upon arrival and at various points throughout the building. All attendees to sanitise (or wash hands for 20 seconds if toilet is used - although using toilets is to be avoided if at all possible) upon entering the building. • Doors to remain open where possible to minimise the need for people to touch door handles (balanced against the relevant fire safety measures). • AV team to be encouraged to wash hands or sanitise with care prior to operating equipment. • Hand dryers and paper towels / 'open' bins to be available in all toilets. 	<p>Hand sanitiser stations at entrance and outside toilets. Stewards to monitor carefully that everyone uses. In WCA.</p> <p>DT open all doors, in line with DTS (gloved hands).</p> <p>COM ensures that adequate paper towels are available at all times. 'Instructions' re toilets included in WCA.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door handles and handrails, as well as other commonly used surfaces such as tables to be disinfected after each service. • Access to the building by members of the church community to be minimised outside of meeting times to reduce spread of infection. 	Building locked up by DT according to DTS.
Spread of virus through shared/ transferred objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees to bring their own Bibles and the Bible readings to be projected on the screens. • Church offerings to continue electronically or, where necessary, to be put in a sealed envelope and deposited in a clearly designated box at the back of the church - to be dealt with by a designated steward. Cash giving to be discouraged. • No food or drink to be served inside the premises. Attendees to be encouraged to bring their own water. • Microphones used for open prayer are not touched by users at any point. • For Communion services, standalone 'communion sets' are collected at the door on the way in. 	<p>Instruction in WCA.</p> <p>Instruction regarding in WCA. DT puts out clearly marked receptacle in designated place and same DT member removes to church office before locking up, in line with schedule.</p> <p>Instruction regarding in WCA. Sign on kitchen clearly indicates no entry. Spare water bottles stored for emergency – Ws have knowledge of.</p>
Spread of virus through inadequate social distancing or illegal interaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees not from the same household (or agreed 'household bubble') to remain at least 1.3 metres apart at all times. • Number of attendees at a service to allow maintaining of the above. • <u>All</u> attendees to be seated in designated seating places provided. • Chairs to be arranged into rows with 1.3m spacing and actual seating for each service clearly indicated on these by name labels, with two empty seats between groups. • Walkways to provide at least 1.3m spacing. • DT to regulate and manage entrance and exits including socially distanced queuing if necessary. • Entry to be through front of church, exit through front fire door or rear fire door onto lawned area. • Drawn-up seating plan to be sent to all attendees in advance. DT to monitor people going to correct seats. 	<p>'Booked' attendees admitted (DT monitors using ChurchSuite on an iPad). Front door closed as meeting starts. If unexpected visitors (e.g. from local community) would like to attend, DT makes enquiries re personal and 'household' symptoms and records names and contact numbers.</p> <p>Details in DTS.</p> <p>Request in WCA. DTs operate one in, one out system.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DT to oversee socially distanced use of toilets. Attendees to avoid use of toilets if at all possible. • DT to seek to maintain a social distance of at least 1.3m from attendees as they walk through the building. • Musicians/singers and leaders/participants to be carefully socially distanced using marked positions on the stage. • Members of the AV Team to maintain at least 1.3m distancing from each other. • Attendees to leave at the close of each service in a timely, orderly and socially distanced, way. • Conversations after the service and in the car park to take place in a socially distanced way. 	<p>Request in WCA. DTs operate one in, one out system.</p> <p>DT monitors.</p>
<p>Spread of virus / illness due to inappropriate attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any individual who is symptomatic, or who is in a household with someone who is symptomatic should not attend and should follow Government guidance. • Attendees to have previously booked online. Except for visitors from the local community, only those who have booked to be admitted to the meeting. • Those who have received notification via the NHS 'track and trace' app should stay away unless they have received a negative test result and are following Government guidance. 	<p>In WCA.</p>

Additional actions:

- Meetings to be kept to one hour maximum.
- Accurate record of every attendee to be kept for twenty-one days (ChurchSuite) after each service in order to assist with NHS Test and Trace should that prove necessary.